

## Claims Resolution Structured Settlement Agreement (CRSSA) Conferences

### *What happens at the conference?*

Under RCW 51.04.062 workers' compensation claims may be settled under certain circumstances. Such a settlement is called a Claim Resolution Structured Settlement Agreement (CRSSA), or structured settlement. If you are thinking about settling your claim in this way, there are some things you should know.

First you need to negotiate the terms of a settlement with the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (if you have a State Fund claim) or with your self-insured employer. After you reach an agreement the signed agreement must be electronically filed with us (Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals). We are required to decide whether the agreement should be approved or rejected.

If you do not have legal representation, RCW 51.04.063 requires you to attend a conference with a judge from the Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals. Representatives from the employer, or Department of Labor and Industries, may also be in attendance.

You will be placed under oath at the conference. The judge will ask questions to ensure that you have a thorough understanding of the terms of the agreement, understand the legal rights you will relinquish in the event the agreement is approved, and have entered into the agreement knowingly and voluntarily.

You may be asked questions concerning your age, marital status, education and employment background, health, medical treatment, financial status, income, legal obligations such as child support, negotiations concerning the agreement, or any other topic that the judge deems necessary to help determine if the agreement is in your best interests.

If the conference judge recommends rejection of the agreement, an order will be issued listing the reasons why the agreement was not approved. That decision cannot be appealed. A revised agreement correcting the problems may be filed by any party.

If the conference judge recommends approval of the agreement, the agreement will be sent to the three members of the Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals for further consideration. The Board will make the final decision approving or rejecting the proposed agreement within thirty working days.